THE

EVANGELIST,

BY WALTER SCOTT.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept!"
—1 Cor. xv. 20. PAUL.

NO. 2.] CARTHAGE, O. FEBRUARY 2, 1835. [VOL. IV.

SACRED COLLOQUY.

NO. 2.

JULIUS AND NEREUS.

Julius:—How beautiful the morning, my Nereus! That sun—that stream of gold poured from his gorgeous face how fair! The welkin too looks like the purple of his kingly shoulders; while the earth, his footstool, spreads her verdant carpeting and sparkles with bright forms for use, for beauty, and for ornament. Blessed God how rich the habitation thou hast framed for man!

Nereus:—The kingdoms of nature, in their beautiful creations and forms, furnish us, my dear Julius, with patterns of the highest beauty, gracefulness, dignity and majesty for use and ornament, and all the imitative arts; so that we have only to draw upon the rich resources of the garden, orchard, field, and forest; the air, the water, the green earth beneath, or the spangled heavens above, to gratify our most perfect taste, and to rise in the scale of morals and intelligence.

Julius:—The simplicity, chastity, beauty, order, richness, minuteness and vastness of the works of nature are, I confess, most impressive, and afford the highest evidences of the existence, power, wisdom, and goodness of their great and immortal Creator, God our Heavenly Father to whom be glory by Jesus Christ! and if we would possess original taste we must love nature and be able to judge of her various and endless productions; their attributes, relations, and uses: but, my dear Nereus, if at the same time we would perfect our taste, and have it as extensive as original, we must not stop at mere natural objects, their relations and uses; but observe, and accustom ourselves to judge of the things in morals and religion to which those are analogous. The mind which stops short of this and fails to discern the analogy which subsists between the present and the future, between time and eternity, and the things of nature and those of revealed religion is microscopic rather than vast;

it may indeed be beautiful and various, but it cannot rival in grandeur and sublimity the genius which sees the connection of all things and unites in itself the different powers of both the microscope and the telescope, and contemplates the innumerable systems which constitute the universe as all mutually subservient to each other—every relation and every system of relations subservient to other relations and other systems of relations, nature to society and both of these to religion and all of them to that state of glory to be revealed hereafter. As such a person sees the whole mundane system with its sun, planets, moons, and comets acting in subserviency to the order and wellbeing of other mundane systems, and these again to others, and these to others, without any conceivable limits, so he conceives all of them to operate relatively to some great, and to us as yet, unknown centre, which forms the throne of God, where in a pre-eminent manner, with surrounding cherubim, the author of the universe displays his glory and sits transcendant in the midst of his creation with countless systems of shining orbs, their planets and their spheres, moving above below and round about him—the whole visible creation with indescribable pomp and majesty being borne forward by the divine fiat through the illimitable fields of uncreated space for ever and for ever.

> " An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
> And roll for ever. Who can satiate sight
> In such a scene, in such an ocean wide
> Of deep astonishment? Where depth, height, breadth
> Are lost in their extremes: and where to count
> The thick sown glories in this field of fire
> Perhaps a seraph's computation fails."

These lines, my dear Nereus, are by one who saw to a great extent the subserviency of the visible creation to that state of glory which we Christians hope for.

Nereus:—You will not, Julius, understand me to reject Christianity as if I had fairly and fully concluded that it wants authority. It may be divine; but before I either receive or reject it, I must know certainly what it is; and what it proposes to accomplish for mankind. If it " has God for its author" as the first of Englishmen, John Locke, has said, I doubt not that there are in it many points analogous to the systems which compose the Universe. I have not, however, been able as yet, to acquire from the teachers of Christianity any distinct ideas of what it really is. During our last confabulation you threw upon my mind a thought or two which I confess have made a more lasting impression on my mind than all I have heretofore heard on this important subject, viz: " that Christianity has its first principles and in this respect is analogous to the different systems in nature."

Julius:—The great mental powers which the author of Christianity has selected as a foundation on which to rear his religious superstructure in the minds of men are the most powerful by which our nature is distinguished: and are at the same time possessed by men universally: the first of

them is belief; the greatest of them is love; they are, "*belief*, *hope*, and *love*," powers the most influential and inspiring, and fitted most eminently to exalt the person who possesses them and to make him what God would have him to be. Now, belief, hope and love are first principles in the Christian system, and are as necessary for the perfection of the Christian as the cohesive and vital forces are necessary to the perfection of a plant. 'Without faith it were impossible to please God;' and without hope the heart of the disciple would die, but both of these again would be useless and unavailing without love. Love indeed is the offspring of faith and hope, and forms a third and greater power. Belief terminates on the things which God has done; hope on those things which he has promised to do; but love terminates on the Deity himself, and is, therefore, most holy, most purifying, most glorious. 'We *love him* because he first loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' Thus belief and hope in what God has done and promised operate to give birth to *love*, according to the Christian system, and these three, belief, hope and love, remain as the only principles on which we can live and die accepted by our Creator.

Nereus:—I admit the supremacy of the principles you have named; and if the author of the Christian system has pitched his fabric of morals on powers of the human mind so universal, active, and efficient in their operation as belief, hope and love, then his knowledge of the human heart is not less certain than the renown of his name is obvious and glorious; for there are no elements in the mind of man more determinately and more generally active than the principles you have enumerated.

But, my Julius, Christianity lays before my understanding a mass of ideas most confused, most unassorted, most undefined. Where is its beginning? Where does its Author desire his disciples to commence?

Julius:—There is in Revelation an inexhaustible fund of theme and subject, so that in point of variety, religion may be regarded as analogous to nature. The bible treats of the origin of the world, and of the birth of time, and of man. It seizes, in the form either of prophecy or history, the two extremes of the world, and all its essential intermediate points. It depicts to us, in a simple but most impressive style the great changes to which the world and men are destined, and the causes from which these changes spring.

It sounds the *tocsin* of the fate of nations, and claims as within the province of its legitimate boundaries, the divine and stirring subjects of death and life, eternity and time, reward and punishment, man and his Maker, and every thing that regards the conduct, words, and thoughts of man in this life and in the life that is to come. But like every other system that has God for its author, the "True Religion" as has already been observed, resolves itself into certain first principles, on the truth and operation of which all subsequent matters depend. And from a knowledge of this, all certain understanding and enlightened views of Christianity must flow. If you have overlooked this truth and these laws

I wonder not at your confusion. In such a case the perplexity, of which you complain, is unavoidable. This is the rock on which the teachers who have proved so useless to you have split. They have failed to teach you what Christianity is because they have failed to teach it you as it is written.

Nereus:—But my dear Julius, many of these men are eminently skilled in the sciences, and shine in the heavens of literature as stars of the first magnitude, their consummate scientific elaborations and prodigious learning show that they were not ignorant of the connection which subsists between "first principles" and the details of science. Are the schemes of Christianity which are taught from the "*sacred desks*" of all parties abroad, wholly without first principles? and are the teachers of these schemes ignorant of the necessary connection of first principles with subsequent phenomena? I cannot possibly regard them as such ignoramuses.

Julius:—Nereus, the schemes of philosophy and of the different systems of nature which were in vogue anterior to the time of Bacon and Newton were not without first principles, so that the error of philosophizers did not consist in a total abandonment of, and disregard to these, but in an arbitrary assumption of them; for without waiting upon the course of nature, and laying the foundation of science on experience they trusted to their reason alone, and were too frequently in the conclusion before they had settled the premises. They arbitrarily assumed things as "first principles" which were not "first principles": This was their fundamental error.

This too is the error, the radical error of the religious system-makers and mongers of the present and the past since the days of our Lord downward. Instead of watching the course of Revelation, and looking at Christianity as a scheme of things already systematized by its author they have foolishly imagined that this has been left for them to do; and so disregarding or overlooking the matters which form the foundations of our holy religion, they have arbitrarily assumed as "first principles" things that are not "first principles;" and in many instances they have built their schemes on matters which are not found in revelation at all.

Nereus:—I have sometimes, I confess, my Julius, been no little astounded at hearing the teachers of your religion emphasise on what they call "eternal election," and I think the Westminster Creed, from which you have apostatized, speaks of certain of the race of man irremediably destined to be consumed in hell for ever, by the decrees of a fatal reprobation. How is this?

Julius:—I have told you, my dear Nereus, how it is. This is the result of system-making; and consequences not less abhorrent to reason than derogatory to the character of God and destructive to man, have, in thousands of instances, arisen from the same prolific source.

One visionary, (and he will be followed by a thousand others more the children of error than himself) will lay it down in opposition to the experience of the world, that man is incapable of believing the gospel. This is a "first prin-

ciple." Now his next thought is to inquire for the results of such premises. He then fairly infers that as man must be saved, seeing Christ has died for him, then he must be made believe, and thus enters the doctrine of supernatural agency in order to faith. This is enough. The multitude immediately begin to gape, and turn up their eyes to the skies, to hollow, to complain, to madden with enthusiasm, or sink into despair. But Christianity, although she has to bear the burden of the people's ignorance, is no more to blame with it than Jesus was to blame for the cross although he had to carry it.

It is no first principle in Christianity "that men cannot believe." But faith itself is a "first principle." First principles are agents, active agents. Now faith is that active principle in the mind of the man of God which gives birth to all subsequent things, whether they relate to the man's character, state, privileges, or destiny. Hope and love are dependant on the pre-existing principle of faith, for without faith it were as impossible to have hope and love towards God as to please him, and the apostle says, 'without faith it is impossible to please God.'

Nereus:—My dear Julius, I have seriously reflected on the best plan of inquiring into this important subject. And, I think, I have concluded upon the best. Many, without knowing what christianity is, seek immediately for a proof of its authority, and I think I have seen in the ministers of the gospel a strong propensity to talk about its divinity rather than to spread before us the thing itself as it is written. Now I am willing to know what Christianity is, before I inquire into its divinity; I shall waive the question of its authority until the last. I shall in this manner know at least what I reject, if I do reject it; and what it is I admit, if I do admit it. In the mean time I shall be happy to ascertain what are its first principles, and to hear you more fully on the analogy of nature and religion.

Julius:—I hear, with unfeigned pleasure, the resolutions to which my beloved Nereus has come, and my anxious heart is ready to make an application of that famous scripture spoken by the King himself, 'that seed sown in good ground are they, who in *an honest and good heart* having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.' The honourable and considerate manner in which you approach this subject is truly gratifying and worthy of all imitation. Praised be the God of my salvation. Adieu, my beloved Nereus.

Nereus:—Adieu.

FAITH COMETH BY HEARING.

It is generally admitted that the words *faith* and *knowledge* represent ideas wholly different. It is agreed that the latter relates to the conviction which we have of the existence and attributes of *objects actually presented to the senses*, and that the former expresses our confidence in the reality of *things unseen*. It is true that some speakers and writers use these words indifferently

owing to haste and carelesness, or a confused and imperfect knowledge of language, but all the standard writers and authorities, human and divine, literary and scientific, political and religious, poets, philosophers, prophets and apostles, theologians and lexicographers, agree that knowledge regards our actual experience, while faith relates to things unseen whether past or future. This is a very important distinction, and could it be duly impressed upon the religious world, it would tend greatly to promote propriety of language, justness of thought, and unanimity of sentiment in the great matters of Christianity. For although no one has denied the propriety of the distinction, or presumed to assert that we can have actual knowledge of things which we have never seen, touched, tasted or handled; or that we merely believe in the existence and qualities of those objects with which our senses are conversant, yet men generally do not seem to perceive the consequences which unavoidably result from definitions so obviously necessary to a correct understanding of these terms.

It is probable nevertheless that many persons suppose the definition of the term *faith* to be yet a matter of dispute, and imagine that the great controversy carried on for centuries respecting faith, has been chiefly or entirely about the meaning of the word. On this account, doubtless, so much pains have been taken to prove that the definition of faith furnished by the apostle in Heb. is the true one, and for the same reason this definition has been so triumphantly arrayed against the doctrines of the schools concerning faith. But which of the opposers of the original gospel has ever declared that Paul's definition of faith is incorrect, and attempted to controvert it? Who has ever asserted that faith is not the evidence of things unseen? On the contrary, does not every one admit that faith relates exclusively to invisible things?

If we be asked then, what has been the point at issue? What has the controversy been about? we answer—not the *definition*, but the origin of faith. All agree that the definition is correct, and it is the *origin* of faith,—the means by which the principle is implanted in the human mind, that has been and continues to be the great subject of disputation.

As it is a very common error with men to confound things that are different, this very obvious distinction between the origin and nature of faith has not been sufficiently attended to, and it is certain that, whether from this cause, or from an overweening desire to sustain a darling dogma, or, which is more likely, from both these causes combined, many have supposed themselves engaged in proving *what faith is*, when they have merely been endeavouring to show *how it is produced*. These nevertheless are quite different matters, as it is one thing to describe a watch, and quite another to tell us how it is formed. This circumstance however, tends to show that the origin of faith is the real subject of controversy, for when those who profess to believe that faith is wrought in the heart by a special and supernatural influence, reply to the question, What is faith? by declaring its origin—that it is the gift of God &c. instead of giving a definition of the principle, does it not prove that the metaphysical theories concerning the means by

which faith is produced, form the burden of their thoughts, and fill their minds to the exclusion even of common sense and common reason, since they seem incapable, from their zeal to assert their disputed tenets, of distinguishing between a gift, and the means through which that gift is obtained? On this account it is that the framers of the *catechism* do not attempt to answer the question by giving a *definition of the principle of faith*, but after asking "*What is justifying faith?*" immediately declare that it is "*a saving grace wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God.*"

Paul however was no sectarian, had no favorite dogmas to sustain, and therefore did not need to parade any peculiar views of the origin of faith when professing to give a definition of the simple term. He confines himself to the question, first defining the principle itself, and then detailing its effects when put into action. He declares that it is the confidence* of things hoped for—that is, the confidence or assurance which we have of the existence of the things for which we hope, which things are of course future and *unseen*. As faith, however, looks backward

"Through the dark postern of time long elapsed"

as well as forward to the ages yet to come, the apostle immediately adds that it is the evidence or assurance which we have of things *not seen;* which is a more general account of it, and will apply equally to the future and the past.

Respecting the correctness then of this definition we repeat there is no controversy, for whenever the opposers of ancient Christianity can be confined to the term itself, *they agree that it relates to things unseen.* We wish the reader to bear this in mind, as we shall make an important use of it presently; and in the mean time, having found what faith is, we will proceed to say a few things concerning the means through which it is obtained.

Different theories of the origin of faith are held by the religious world. Of these the most prevalent is that the Holy Spirit must first be given, and that faith is produced in the heart by a special and peculiar divine influence, or in other words that it is an inward and spiritual grace wrought in the heart irrespective and independent of any thing external. This doctrine forms the nucleus of corrupt Christianity, and with certain modifications is the distinguishing characteristic of most, if not all, the sects in Christendom. We dissent from it however, and will now endeavour to prove that this dogma is contrary both to the scriptures and to reason.

Every one knows that man is a creature possessed of five senses; seeing, hearing, feeling, taste and smell, which constitute the only avenues through which he can receive ideas. Of these the three latter, smell, taste and touch, relate chiefly to the body, while the two former, seeing and hearing have a more special reference to the mind, and it is through these that the intellectual principle is chiefly addressed. Of all the senses, if we may be permitted to compare qualities each so admirable and excellent, that of seeing is the most perfect and delightful. Possessed of a more extended range, rejoicing in light that

* Macknight.

pure effluence of eternal glory, embracing at once the distant landscape, the deep extensive forest, and the lofty mountain towering to the heavens, and the heavens themselves; and at the same time able to contemplate the minute insect which feeds upon the tender filaments of the plant that springs at our feet, the pleasurable sensations we experience in its exercise, are more enduring and more exquisite than those enjoyed through the medium of any of the other senses. The information also which we receive through this faculty we are accustomed to regard as in the highest degree certain: and although we sometimes experience singular optical illusions, yet so true are its decisions in the general, that occular demonstration is commonly and with the greatest propriety regarded as conclusive evidence. Thus Job says, comparing as it were the relative merits of the two great avenues to reason, 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.' Job, xlii. 5.

As it regards certainty, however, this sense is equalled if not surpassed by that of touch, which is usually called in to aid the eyes and correct or corroborate the impressions received through them. By the concurrent action of these two senses with any of the others, the highest possible degree of certainty may be attained. It is on this account that one of the apostles in order to denote the infallibility of their testimony, informs us that they 'declared what their ears had heard, what they had seen with their eyes, and what their hands had handled.'

Each of the senses has certain peculiar objects or attributes upon which alone it can be exercised. Taste detects sapidity; the sense of smell discovers odours, and the ear perceives sounds. The eye and the touch take a wider range, and distinguish not one property of matter merely but several,—the former marking the form, attitude, colour, relative situation &c. of objects, and the latter informing us of their hardness, figure, smoothness, size &c. But each sense must be exercised within its appropriate boundaries, since the eye cannot detect sounds, nor the ear odours, nor can the idea of colour be received through the taste, nor that of smell through the touch: nevertheless ideas of certain objects may be presented to the mind through more than one sense, as through the eye by the object itself, or through the ear by a description, if the object be out of sight.

We wish the reader then to attend to these established truths,—1st, that the five senses are the only avenues to the mind of which we know any thing; 2nd, that each sense has its own peculiar sphere of action; and, 3d, that the assurance which we have of the existence or attributes of things *actually presented to the senses* is called *knowledge*. Faith then is distinguished from knowledge by this that it is the confidence we have in the existence of things *unseen*:—things past, at a distance out of view, or in the future, none of which of course can be really presented to, or brought into actual contact with any of the senses.

We will now offer one argument against the popular views of the origin of faith, and lest this article should extend to an unreasonable length, we will at present merely state the argument.

The popular doctrine is that faith (that is the faith of the gospel of Christ, for to this our present inquiry is confined) is produced either by having the objects of faith brought within the range of the action of the senses, as seeing

he Saviour &c. —or by a strong and overpowering feeling excited within the eart by the power of the Holy Spirit---in other words, that faith comes by eeing or feeling, by actual experience, or to carry it out to its legitimate issue, hat faith is neither more nor less than knowledge.

But we have shown that faith and knowledge are two different matters; and ave proved that faith is the assurance which we have of things *unseen*, 1st, om the fact of its being thus defined by all standard human authorities. 2nd om its being thus defined by the Apostle Paul, and 3dly, from its not having een disproved or even denied by our opponents, but on the contrary fully admitted by them, since the only controversy has been about how it comes.

We argue therefore, that since faith relates exclusively to things *unseen* which f course are not subjected to the direct action of any of our senses it follows as *necessary consequence that the only testimony which we can have respecting hese unseen things must be presented to the* EAR *through the medium of words poken* * or in the language of Paul (whose account of the origin of faith comorts precisely with his definition of the principle) that '*faith comes by hearing nd hearing by the word of God*, from the *necessity of the case* since it is imossible for the *faith of the gospel* to come in any other way. R. R.

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

The Cloud.

TO DR. JOHN THOMAS, RICHMOND, VA.

EARLY BELOVED,

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God and from Jesus ur Lord.

IN your No. of the "Advocate" for November last, you were caused to address to your fellow servant some observations relative to the Second advent of Messiah." I ought, on several accounts, to have taken n earlier notice of your favour; but, my dear brother, I could not. I beg, herefore, that a sincere regard for your person and a just respect for your talents, nd labours in Christ, may be allowed to supersede apology. I could say many hings, but as an Editor and an affectionate brother you will anticipate all that have to offer in the way of excuse.

The subject of the "Second Advent" you say, is one in which you are greatly interested," and in which you "firmly believe." This, dearly beoved, is my own case and the case of thousands more. Like yourself I have

---

* *Written* words are merely the representations of *sounds*—of words *spoken*, and ltimately relate to the ear. Presenting words to the eye is a device similar to that by hich they are presented to the fingers of the blind by elevated letters. They read herefore, by the sense of touch the representations of sounds uttered.

read all kinds of authors on the subject, the great men of England, and as some would think, the little men of America; so that when I concluded to write a few essays on the subject, the difficulty with so many authors and so much matter before me, was not what to write, but where to begin to write.

On the one hand lay the *Literalists*, and on the other the *Figurativists*, not one of whom ever did or ever can apply to prophecy his one-sided scheme of interpretation, from the fact that prophecy is communicated to us through the several organs of *words* and *symbols*, and also because both words and even phrases are used figuratively. Instead, therefore, of following them in their impertinent flights about literal and figurative interpretations of prophecy, I thought it better for those for whom I wrote, better for the developement of the gospel and for myself, to adopt a common sense scheme of interpretation and commence where I did and lay down as a substratum to all subsequent propositions the following:

That Jesus will come again into this world; that he will come from Heaven; will come with his angels; will be seated on his throne; will come to a cloud; will come suddenly, unexpectedly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, like lightning, and that every eye will behold him.

Here it is you meet me: and you meet me like a man and a Christian, and state your objections in a way which at once inspires admiration for your ingenuousness, and respect for your learning. You do not then reject the proposition, that "every eye shall see him;" but only my understanding of it, and the fanciful theory, which, you think, I was obliged to bring in to aid me. I have said that the inhabitants of this earth, universally, will see Jesus in the clouds when he comes the second time; you think he will be seen by the Jews only; and these are our respective views of the verse which you have rendered into English by a new translation. It is most probable, however, that the limitation which you give to the passage is strictly proper. Your translation of the verse, 'Behold he is coming in the clouds &c., does appear to me more correct than either the Latin version, or the versions of France, and England, and indeed, more than that in Bro. Campbell's edition.

There are in scripture two organs employed for communicating knowledge to the saints, *words* and *symbols*. Figures, which everywhere abound in scripture both rhetorical, oratorical, and grammatical, do not form an organ of communication but of illustration only, and are used for giving point and brilliancy to literal language. The sacred writers never employ symbols to instruct their readers, and there is no symbolic book in the Bible. The Revelations are sometimes styled a symbolic book, but improperly; for in writing it John has not employed a single symbol; his language is the common language of those for whom he wrote, and his book is only a written history of certain symbols which he saw in vision. He narrates in our own language what he saw and heard: but these symbols were doubtless the representatives of things in the future; for he was called up into heaven to see the things which "must be hereafter." The parts of scripture in which we have the history of certain symbolic visions are, Daniel, Zechariah, John &c. Now, sir, these are the parts of the sacred writings which I have quoted from very sparingly, in laying down my premises

concerning the 'Second Coming of Christ,' and in my endeavours to sustain these, I have confined myself to the gospels and epistles, the words of Christ and Paul chiefly; for I knew the moment I should get into the figures and symbols I should blow up a quarrel about *literals* and *figuratives*, and so close the business in a cloud of very big words and very little sense, that is, I would leave the readers of the Evangelist where I found them, in relation to the second advent of Christ and its adjuncts.

The subjects of most symbols in the Revelations are intentionally concealed, and therefore they cannot be easily understood: but the grotesque figures of dragons, and serpents, and beasts, and frogs, and harlots, and hailstones, and the more elevated symbols of clouds, and suns, and moons, and stars, open a sublime and widely extended field of speculation for the lovers of the marvelous and those who dream about the Millennium, and the literal, and figurative interpretation of prophecy—prophecy, which could not be known before they were born, and will not be understood after they have died.

The plan of coming directly to the "Second Advent," and of appealing to the words of Christ and Paul, is so simple as at once to conduct the believer into an orderly apprehension of the subject, and to leave little room for self complacency in the writer.

In my next I shall speak of the day of his coming, and of the business of the day. Have you any more objections? State them if you have. I will listen to you with the greatest possible respect. ED.

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

REVIEW.

"THE UNION OF CHRISTIANS FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD—*A Sermon, delivered in Madison. Ia., April 20th, 1834, by the Rev. Andrew Wylie, President of Indiana College.* Printed by J. Lodge & E. Madison, 1834." pp. 17, 8mo.

'THE union of Christians for the conversion of the world'.—This is a grand subject! Hitherto how little thought of—how little talked of—how little understood! and its im portance, consequently, how little felt, by the great majority of those who bear the Christian name! The reason is that discord and disunion, sects, and sectarians, have been thought of, talked of, and understood in place of it—have been advocated by *priests lips*, which should have kept knowledge; preached from the *sacred desk;* believed in by laymen; and practised upon by all the world. But we rejoice, that we have lived to see a different state of things introduced—the old standard of the cross re-erected by the *sect* called Christian at Antioch; that we have heard the trumpet of reformation sounded, and the ancient gospel proclaimed; and that it has been our privilege to know, by experience and observation, that the truth as it is in Jesus believed and obeyed will make disciples ONE. We rejoice to perceive by the "signs," that the "*times*" are changing—that sects are shaking, crumbling, falling to pieces; and that the good and great men in them, are beginning to take the alarm—to awake—to look about them—and to trim

their lamps. Dr. Wylie, we take it for granted from the discourse before us, is one of those good and great men. His text, (for how can they preach except they have a text?) is John, xvii., 20, 21.

" ' *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*' "

" The union of Christians" is the subject—" the union of Christians for the conversion of the world." Aware that, for a *Presbyterian* he was about to step upon hitherto untrodden ground, the Doctor, in his introduction, thus bespeaks the candid indulgence of his audience to the thoughts he has to advance.

" Our text will lead us to take a general view of this subject which it is believed has seldom been taken and which ought to be, on that account and many others, presented to the attention of the Christian public. That I shall not be able to do justice to it in the compass of a single discourse, I am fully aware. But it is a view of the subject which has, of late, excited deep and painful feelings in my own mind, feelings which, I think, it would be criminal not to communicate. If they are wrong it would be a great relief to the anguish of my spirit to have them corrected: but if not they ought to be well weighed and regarded. That they will not seem new to any of you I am bound to suppose. For you are a Christian people, and the thoughts which I have to present belong to the very heart and vitals of Christianity. But they are connected with some practical matters of great and perplexing difficulty.—May God grant us light to shew us what ought to be done and grace to do it, whatever pain the doing of it may cost us."

From this extract it may be seen that Doctor W. is not fast asleep, like some of his brethren—he is waking up—he has got his eyes half-way open—he has laid hold of a grand subject—he feels its importance, and cannot let it go. But yet, he is in *darkness* on some practical matters of great and perplexing difficulty, and prays for light. O that light might beam forth upon him from the sacred Oracles! How great his darkness is as it regards *some practical matters;* and how the darkness has blinded his eyes, we shall have occasion to show as we proceed. But first, let us present some of the good things which he says on " the union of Christians," and on the evils of " disunion," which come first in the discourse.

" In the text the Saviour prays that his followers might be one."
" What is the union of which he speaks?"

The doctor proceeds to name several kinds of union which " *it cannot be;*" and among these he places " union in faith." But by faith, here, he does not manifestly mean faith, but *opinion*, the difference between which, we presume, he cannot in the midst of his *perplexity* understand. This will appear from his affirmative answer to the question, which follows. Hear the Doctor!

" The Saviour must mean a union and harmony among Christians in views and affection, manifested in the outward conduct so clearly and unequivocally

to attract the notice of the world. And without this union among Christians the conversion of the world is not to be expected. This the text must mean if it means any thing. This indeed is the doctrine of the whole bible. And it is the doctrine of common sense and of all human experience. A house divided against itself cannot stand, and every kingdom divided against itself must come to desolation."

Mark it, reader, the Doctor says, the union prayed for by the Saviour, "must mean a union and harmony among Christians in *views* and *affection*" &c. First, in *views*,—and what is a union in views, but a union in sentiment —an assent of the understanding upon testimony; or a union in *faith?* As, 'without faith it is impossible to please God;' as the Christian *lives* and *stands* and *walks* by faith; and, consequently, there can be no Christian affection, feeling, or conduct, without Christian faith, in charity for the Doct., we must understand him, in the extracts above given, by "views" to *mean* faith, and by "faith" to *mean opinion*. Thus understood, in this first definition we perfectly agree with him. *Union in faith, in affection, in action*—for these the Saviour prays for his disciples: and this prayer must be heard and answered, before the world can be converted.

The Doctor now talks and reasons like a man. He calls upon matter and upon mind, upon common sense and the bible for their testimony; and each separately answers, and all together respond:

"UNION and STRENGTH; DISUNION and WEAKNESS."

Four pages are thus filled, from which we extract the following:

"He has told us, both in his written word and in the experience of fifteen centuries, that the union of Christians is a moral means necessary to the conversion of the world. How dare we, then, look for the end without the means? How dare we expect that efforts for the conversion of the world, originating in principles the very opposite to that holy principle which He has ordained and consecrated as the instrument for the conversion of the world, should be owned and blessed of Him for that purpose? Do we expect him to contradict himself!—to falsify his word?—to set aside the prayer of the Redeemer!—to incorporate the works of the devil among the effective agency of the kingdom of heaven!

Am I to be referred, in contradiction to all this, to the alledged fact of the rapid diffusion of Christianity in our day, which it will be said, has taken place notwithstanding the discord which, it must be granted, still continues to distract and disunite the great body of professing Christians?"

"What has become of Christianity in Asia Minor? Greece, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, France, Holland, and the north of Africa? Has religion kept pace with the growth and diffusion of our own population? Are the Aborigines of our borders evangelized? Are the two millions and an half of our colored population—Alas! Alas! notwithstanding all that is told us of the progress of Christianity—and I am not now going to call in question the truth of the accounts which are given us on this subject—though, in all the cases which have happened to fall under my own personal notice the statement generally has gone a little beyond the fact—yet, granting the truth of all we hear and read on the subject of the extension of Christianity in our day, the undisguised, the humiliating truth is, that less has been done towards the conversion of the world in the present generation by United Christendom,—I mean by divided, distracted Christendom, than was effected by Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, in his own single, persecuted person. I do not say that less has been done *about* this business, by the aggregate efforts of Christendom than was done by Paul. For I admit there is a good deal of zeal among Christians in relation to this subject—though far from enough—and many societies are organized—and speeches made, and dollars raised, and printing presses employed in furnishing copies of the bible, and tracts, and books for children, to be gratuitously taught on the Lord's day; in short, there is a vast machinery set up and kept in motion, with a direct tendency to, and bearing upon the desired object. All

this is well: and more of this sort of work, I allow, is done by us than was done by Paul. But still, I aver, less is *effected*. We hear a vast multitude employed with pickaxes and levers and blasts of powder, in trying to heave from its base the "stone" which is to smite the image and break it in pieces, and then "become a great mountain and fill the whole earth;" and shouting multitudes send up a perpetual cry of encouragement,—but still—it does not move—it does not grow. With this state of things compare the progress of Christianity in primitive times. The "leaven hid in three measures of meal"—how soon did it ferment the general mass?—how soon did Christianity diffuse itself through the greatest part of three continents? The "grain of mustard seed"—How rapid, how noble was its growth! Do we witness any thing similar in modern times? What permanent effects, among the Indians of our neighborhood have, for instance, followed from the labors of Elliott, and Brayнard, and Mayhew, and Edwards, and many more of the like spirit who succeeded them in this field of labor? None! Comparatively none! How is this? With solemn emphasis let each Christian hearer propose to himself the question, How is this? "The arm of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear.—Our iniquities have separated between us and our God: Our sins have hid his face from us." And what among the number of our sins is more prominent, more scandalous and more like to have produced this effect than the sin of DISCORD among brethren? The spirit of discord has driven the spirit of Christian meekness from the church, by whose influence alone it is that the world is to be converted.

The evidence to support the truth of this statement is too strong to be controverted, too plain to be mistaken, and too obvious to be unnoticed by any one. But to descant upon it, by a detail of particulars, would be a task for which I have neither time nor inclination. Suffice it merely to say, that the churches of the reformation—I pass by the church of Rome—have become divided and sub-divided, till it has become a burden to the memory to retain their distinctive names and peculiarities; that the most of their members refuse to unite with any but those of their own sect in any act of religious worship and especially in that which was intended, among other purposes, to denote the church's unity, insomuch that its very name has lost its primitive signification, and *communion* is converted into a badge of sectarian difference: that many are restricted by what they call conscience, or by the rules of their discipline, from the enjoyment of gospel ordinances", etc., etc.

"Whoever, therefore, will not do all he can to remove the evil makes himself responsible for a share in the blame of retarding the conversion of the word: Are any willing to incur this responsibility? I trust in God there are not".

Reader, is not this good? Are not these things well said? How just to Paul! How just to primitive christianity in primitive times! How just, too, to all the motley combinations of saints and sinners, to all the enterprizes and efforts of "united, divided, distracted christendom" at the present day! Who would now think Dr. Wylie to be a *Presbyterian?* But we come to the second great division of the subject.

Now, for the *darkness* in which the Doctor gropes. He answers:

"Enquire we, then, what is to be done. That something may, and ought to be done, and that speedily, for the purpose of healing the breaches of Zion, is sufficiently manifest, but what should be done, is the difficulty. 'What is to be done?' This question I shall honestly attempt to answer, in part, not fully; sensible, as I am, of the great difficulties which attend it."

"1. And, in the first place, let me remark, that a rigid mode of interpreting the standard of our church (for it is chiefly in reference to our church that I speak) ought to be avoided."

"2. Much may be done by healing the divisions which have taken place in the church by treating with respect the mysteries of religion."

"3 Allied to this practice of converting the mysteries of religion into themes of bold and presumptuous speculation is another which has been no less productive of those evil consequences to the church which we have so much reason to deplore, and for which it is the main object of the present discourse to suggest a remedy. I refer to the practice of attaching too much importance to modes and ceremonies in religion."

"4. It would greatly tend to promote the purity as well as the peace of the church, if her public teachers in all the different denominations should, as with one consent avoid the points of sectarian peculiarity, and, both in their public administrations and private intercourse among their people, insist more than any of them do on the great matters of personal piety and social duty."

"5. The influence of names has a great deal to do in supporting the unhallowed cause of division and strife among the churches of the reformation. The several parties have been trained to follow their file leaders—the *great* and *good men* by whom the party was first organized."

'*How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!*' Who would have *thought* it? who would have thought, that Doctor W., after depicting the evils of sectarianism in such glowing colors; standing upon an eminence from which all the different sects were viewed by him, contending for their different *standards* and human *isms* and, in consequence of this, contending against one another, would now be found advocating the use of one of these? But so it is. The union of Christians for the conversion of the world, which the Doctor considers a desideratum, it hence appears, is, either the union of Presbyterians only on the Westminster Confession of Faith, *liberally construed;* (for it is chiefly in reference to the Presbyterian Church that the Doctor speaks;) or, the union of Presbyterians on their creeds, and that of other religious denominations on theirs, in like manner, till all finally be so sanctified and made *one*, through the truth of the bible, as to become good Presbyterians!!

[*To be continued.*] F. W. E.

ON SLAVERY.

TO DR. NATHANIEL FIELD.

Dear Brother,

You say, "I perceive from your reply, in the October number of the Evangelist, that the die is cast—that you are the apologist for slavery, and are willing that it shall go hand in hand with the principles of the Ancient Gospel," &c.

I am no apologist for slavery, Brother Field; nor am I willing that it should go hand in hand with the gospel; but I am willing that slavery should be thought and spoken of correctly, comprehensively, and according to its proper nature, as a matter of fact question.

Please read the following, from brother A. Littell, after which I shall add a few words and conclude my letter.

"Not having troubled you with many letters heretofore, I shall take the liberty of noticing a certain matter, which in some manner affects the reputation of our church for sincerity.

Some of the talented brethren of Kentucky, visit us occasionally, and we in return, occasionally visit them; now after reading brother Field's letter and your reply to it, in number 10, volume 3, Evangelist, we must appear to those gentlemen in rather a singular predicament for consistency.

Permit me, therefore, to submit the following in the way of explanation.—The act of the Silver Creek Association to which brother Field refers, but without understanding it, was passed in August 1825, at which time the Association saw proper to drop correspondence with Long Run Association, Ken-

tucky; but it was not then or at any other time assigned as a reason for suspending the correspondence, that the Long Run Association was guilty of holding slaves. It was only urged by divers brethren then present, that the barbarous treatment of slaves, especially of those in the church with their masters, should if not corrected after a labor of many years, be deemed sufficient cause for calling in the correspondence.

You ask what is this you call the Silver Creek Association, &c.? Brother Scott I shall tell you. Then it is a congregation of disciples, who meet together to worship God, and not as an authoritative body to make laws for the church of Christ. We have both before and since 1825 been laboring to return to the ancient simplicity of the gospel; and the churches though they have existed twenty-eight years, have never once made any law PRO nor CON on slavery; and that too from the fact that they deem the question of slavery to belong essentially to the nation and not to the church as things at present exist. But although nothing of this kind is found in our records, we nevertheless, to this day, abhor and deprecate the conduct of some of our slave-holding brethren to the colored disciples who are with them as members of the same churches. Still the sin of slavery seems to be entailed on the present generation without their guilt. A disciple or church in particular cases may advise, but to accomplish the liberty of our slave population, the national government must act. Brother Field's letter was the cause of your censure; but why so severe?

May you abound more and more in the work of the Lord. May you do much good in the cause of our Redeemer.

In the hope of immortality,

Yours, &c.,

A. LITTELL."

Bro. Field,—The above, from our beloved brother Littell, wipes away all suspicions of the simplicity and chastity of the Silver Creek churches in relation to good order, and fealty to our Lord, the King. They are wholly faultless in this matter, and have done nothing to forfeit the confidence and communion of the churches of Christ.

But we place Slavery upon its proper basis when wo say it is a political and not a religions evil. A few years ago the question of marriage ran very high; and individuals were even excommunicated because they had married wives who had not yet professed the faith. But no sooner was the question generalized and put upon its proper political basis than it was discovered that the King had not legislated on the question, Who shall disciples marry? but only had decreed that disciples should behave like good citizens and his disciples, towards those whom they did marry. This ended the quarrel.

Well, is it different with slavery? No, it is the same. Slavery is a political evil, depending for its existence on the national law; and therefore let the nation look to it. God will judge us for making those laws which have brought slavery into being; and Christ will judge those of his disciples who have slaves

and act incongruously to the relation which subsists between masters and slaves. —But I challenge you, brother Field, and all the anti-slave-holders under the heavens, to point me to one single law in the code of the christian nation, saying that a citizen of the kingdom shall not hold a slave. This is not where the law of Christ enters. He does not say that the relation of master and slave shall not exist among his disciples; but meeting it among them He says, "Art thou called being a slave? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a slave, is the Lord's freed man: likewise also he that is called being free is Christ's slave." I say, then, that Messiah the Prince has not ordered that his disciples shall not hold slaves if it be permitted by the nation; but he has ordered that those who hold them shall deal by them as those who themselves have a Master in heaven; and with him there is no respect of persons.

You may, as you have already done, brother Field, push into my face an *argumentum ad modestiam*, and say "You are the apologist for slavery." This will not make me ashamed. You may even imagine that I am angry with you because of the free expression of your sentiments on this subject. I can only say you are mistaken. When I read your first letter, instead of being angry, I smiled in the face of the brother who listened; because I thought I perceived that what was lacking in wisdom was fairly made up in benevolence. I am not angry, then, dearly beloved, but I am determined, resolutely determined, that no fond ideas of liberty, no utopian schemes of universal emancipation, not my own reason, no, nor even the reason of all mankind shall ever the Lord willing come between me and that illustrious personage whom my heart and soul have made an unconstrained choice of to direct me in all the things of life and of religion, of time and of eternity.

I say, if slavery is to be abolished, let means be adopted for creating in the slave States, and in the halls of the slave State Legislatures, parties equal to its abolition; equal to the passing of bills for its abolition. Begin, for instance, with Kentucky, the noble home of noble men,—men who will yield to favour but never to force; men who can feel respect, but cannot brook insult; and there create not a religious, nor a politico-religious, but a strictly political party, who shall play the proper part in this affair, and in a proper manner, that is by voting. Then the thing will be done, but this canting, whining, Presbyterian cry to raise in the free States, societies and auxiliaries, is, in my judgment at least, most contemptible and in no wise equal to that which they would accomplish. These gentry appear to me like ants pushing at Mount Atlas; and pushing at it too from the top of Mount Athos.

Let us imitate Great Britain; let bills be preferred in the slave State Assemsemblies, and the citizens of these States go to the polls; and, in this as in every other political question, let the majority rule. The majority in the American commonwealth will rule; it ought to rule.

We wait, however, for your scheme; please let us have it forthwith.

The Lord bless you, and direct you in all things.

As ever, yours in Christ Jesus.

WALTER SCOTT.

Correspondence.

From Bro. Dowling.—The progress of the gospel in these parts has exceeded all expectation. The people come out to hear and all the honest hearted obey. Bro. M. and myself since harvest have immersed within the bounds of our church 30 persons, and in and around Mansfield 300 within a year. At Newville I attended a meeting at which the preacher, a Baptist, argued for eternal and unconditional election; the people, however, declined hearing him through and a number left the house. At another place four Baptists and three Mormons offered for admission and were received; all the Saints rejoiced, even sinners dropt a tear on an occasion so affecting. The Lord establish you in every good word and work.

Yours, &c.

Mt. Gilead, Ohio.

From Bro. Carman.———— Thirty at least of the most intelligent and pious members of the Rev. J. F's congregation have cast in their lot with us, leaving but few behind. On next Lord's day a man, formerly one of his elders, and his wife are to be united to us in the bonds of the gospel. The church is still upon the increase. Twenty months ago our number was thirty; at present it is 140. Of talent for teaching and exhortation we have abundance. Our meetings are truly interesting; even the world regard them with pleasure; many drop in to see and hear: you would be a welcome visitor here.

Affectionately, &c.

Baltimore, Md.

From Bro. John M. Woolen.———— Dear Bro. Scott. We have a great many small churches in this part of our country, many of which are rapidly increasing in the knowledge of God. Active and intelligent teachers, however, are greatly wanted. John L. Jones rides constantly, and has had good success. Bro. O'Kane has done good here; but we have not seen him for some time.

Indianapolis.

From Bro. F. Williams.———— The prospects here are encouraging. Our number is increasing; more were added during the last summer and fall, probably, than in the same length of time at any previous period of the Reformation.

Ravenna, Ohio.

From Bro. Carey Smith.———— Since my last I have visited Bartholomew County in this state, and had the pleasure of introducing into the kingdom of our Lord an aged lady, who was immersed on one of our cold

December days. She was upwards of 60 years of age, and about 30 years a professor of a popular religion. I also visited Ripley County, where two made the good confession.

GREENSBURG INDIANA.

From Bro. W. R. COLE, Esq.——————— I enclose you one dollar as my subscription for the year 1835, and am happy to observe the appearance of your list of receipts in your last Evangelist, which by its length, seems to indicate a more prompt payment or a more extensive subscription than formerly, both of which I hope you will experience in the present year. Indeed it is the peculiar and appropriate right of the gospel to call upon its votaries for the exercise of all their moral, intellectual and physical powers; and as all we have is the gift of God our Heavenly Father, in either or all of these powers, it not only becomes our duty to compel our passions, and appetites, and every other faculty, either of body, soul or spirit, over which it is the province of reason to preside, to serve the KING MESSIAH—but to compel old MAMMON himself with all his adverse and numerous agents to aid the cause, the great cause of our salvation, however reluctant he may be; for we are told for our encouragement, that (with all his unrighteousness) it is not unlawful to make him our *friend*—but to do this we must *use him*, and not permit him to *use us*.

WILMINGTON, OHIO.

DEAR BROTHER SCOTT,—Although I have not the happiness of a personal acquaintance with you, I take the liberty of addressing you thus familiarly, knowing indeed that we are of the same family, the royal family of the King our Father. All the disciples here, my sisters, D. Atwater and lady, who knew you when you laboured in this region, join me in Christian regard.

I am the wife of D. E., Postmaster of this place, who is at present from home on professional business. I write at the request of one of the brethren, and inclose, &c. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

The disciples here are in a more prosperous state than formerly though not so much so as we could wish. Eleven, since the 1st of June have been added to this church by making the good confession. All of us are young save three; among them are three daughters of my mother, who, alas! has since gone to rest. She died on the 30th of August. * * * *

Your sister in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

Mantua, O. S. A. E.

Beloved sister,—I condole with you on the occasion of your mother's decease. She now, I hope, waits with the spirits of all the just to be clothed in that immortality which the King our Father has promised to all his saints. Blessed be our King, our God, and blessed be his Son our Saviour.

"Can this be death?
The yielding up a transitory breath—
Seeking a tranquil for a stormy clime—
Pleasure for pain—Eternity for time—
The kingdom where creation's birth began
And heaven's sweet hope for earth, and God for man?
No! 'tis not death.

And what is death?
In dark despair to yield th' unwilling breath—
To see with bursting eyes the charnel ope,
The past a curse—the future without hope;
Beside the bed the ghost of murdered Time,
Leading with gory hand, accusing Crime?
Ah! that is death.

Then 'tis not death,
Dear friend, that clos'd thy pious mother's breath!
'Twas Heaven, its meed of glory to bestow,
That call'd her soul above from ills below.
Death is *sin's* wages, the Apostle said,
But she was pardoned! can she then be dead?
No! 'tis not death."

I hope the disciples, the faithful disciples, of the church in your vicinity, whom we love in the Lord, will give all dilligence to perfect themselves in Jesus Christ. I congratulate you on the success of the good cause in M——— and on the conversion of your sisters. May the Lord bless them and you together, and to his majesty be eternal honor through Jesus our Lord.

W. SCOTT.

FROM BRO. W. HAYDEN:—It would be good for you to visit the Western Reserve and to see the very boys whom you seven years ago immersed, preaching and baptising like men. Yet we cannot boast of our zeal; but still the churches and teachers are perhaps doing all they can. I have immersed about fifty-six this year; and the aggregate of immersions by all our teachers here, is probably about three hundred. We want a few Elijahs. I am yet as determined as ever to hold on the even tenor of my way; but my voice is gradually and sensibly failing: the indisposition which prevails in my family renders the absence which is necessary to preach the gospel, exceedingly inconvenient

STREETSBORO, W. RESERVE.

ITEMS.

The income for the past year of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, (England) was 54,767 *l.* 9*s.* 7*d*; of the London Society 45,175 *l.* 4*s.* 8*d.*

The venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, voted 1000 *l.* towards supplying the Negro population in the West India Islands with copies of the Liturgy of the Church of England.

ADVERTISEMENT.

We beg leave to invite the attention of our readers to the following notice of Lafayette Seminary, taught by brother Beverly A. Hicks. We have not the happiness of a personal acquaintance with brother Hicks; but we have had the most pleasing accounts of his character both as a gentleman and as a successful instructor of youth. No doubt those who shall confide to him the care of their young men will realize all that his promises warrant them to hope for. EDITOR.

ENGLISH BOARDING SCHOOL.

LAFAYETTE SEMINARY,

Situated within 4 miles of Lexington, Ky.

THIS Institution will be opened for the education of youth, as usual, on the 15th of next month, (January) and continue to the 15th of December following, being a term of eleven months, for the School Year. Board, tuition, mending, washing, towels, fuel, and candles for one hundred dollars per scholar, but each boarder is to find his own bed and bedding, or if it be required the teacher will furnish them for a fair additional charge. Having from my untiring exertions to please, and great success in teaching, been very liberally encouraged as a teacher, for more than twenty years, by gentlemen from a number of States in the Union; I again respectfully solicit a continuance of the same, and assure the public that my best exertions to advance the very best interests of my pupils both morally and mentally, shall at all times be extended to them.

Reference, –the citizens of Lexington, Ky, generally.

BEVERLY A. HICKS.

December 20th, 1834.

Bro. Scott,

Bro. B. A. Hicks is well known to the inhabitants of Lexington, and the country generally as an amiable and intelligent disciple, and also as a successful and zealous educator of young men: his School is patronized not only in this State but in other States, and he doubtless has well earned the distinguished reputation that he posesses. *Please to call the attention of the Disciples* and others to the School as a *safe* and *good* one for educating the young men, who may be sent here for that purpose. He resides about six miles from Lex., on a farm, well provided with all the comforts and conveniences of life, and to carry on his public instruction with profit and pleasure.

JAMES CHALLEN.

THE GOSPEL ADVOCATE.

The first No. of the Gospel Advocate, edited by brethren, John T. Johnson and B. F. Hall, Lexington, Ky., has just been received; and we congratulate the Reformation on the accession of so powerful and pure an auxiliary as the Advocate promises to be. The chief pieces in said No. are, one on Conscience, one on Towns and Cities, one on Practical Reformation, Obedience, &c. &c. all of them written in a very pithy manner and breathing the good sense, the love of righteousness, and the spirit of the excellent Christian men by whom they have been severally indited. May the Lord bless the Editors, and may the Brethren be endowed with the good sense and liberality necessary to the support of so excellent a medium of Christian intercommunication.

EDITOR.

Obituary.

DEATH OF JOSEPH GASTON.

Joseph Gaston was a very remarkable man on several accounts. His innocence, and sweet disposition endeared him to all his acquaintances; and his strong faith and excellent talents made him a most acceptable minister in the church when his health permitted the exercise of his various gifts; for he had the gifts of teaching and exhorting in an eminent degree, and was until he was seized with hæmorrhage at the lungs, a very good singer.

When he opened the Evangelists or Epistles and poured himself out on their sacred pages no man of equal education excelled him; but exhortation was his forte, and in this I never knew any man who equalled him. He exercised the most powerful influence over the congregation when he remonstrated, and with much variety of thought his exhortations were distinguished for unity in their subject.

He accompanied me in 1827, soon after the restoration of the true gospel, and shared with me for about three weeks in the labors and difficulties of the onerous business of introducing to public notice the gospel of Christ as now held by this reformation.

The circumstances which made him acquainted with the ancient gospel at that time are a little singular and worth relating. He visited Carthage about two years ago, and entertained brother Rogers' family one evening with a recital of his conversion to it, and brought again to mind things that had almost escaped recollection.

I had appointed a certain day in which to break bread with the Baptist church at Salem. Bro. Gaston was a resident of Columbiana county, and was at that time in the vicinity of Salem. The Baptist brethren regarded him as a good man, and a true disciple; but he was a Christian or Newlight, and contended for open communion—things which they greatly disliked. Before meeting, the principal brethren requested me to converse with him on the subject, saying, they were sure I could convert him.

Accordingly I took him out in presence of them all; but he gave me no time, being as impatient and undoubting on open communion, as they were then on close communion. I told him, however, that the brethren had commissioned me to convert him to their opinions, and smiled. He said, he had come to convert me to his.

I then set before him the terms of the Ancient gospel as I had arranged them; and told him, that their dispute about communion, was silly and unprofitable. He heard me with delight. I appealed to the scriptures, and he smiled—and smiled and laughed, and exclaimed, It is all true! and I believe every word of it, and will take you to a Christian brother who will receive it in a moment.

After meeting I accompanied him to the house of said brother, living a mile and a half from the Village; and the man and his wife hearing it, and examining the scriptures, received it with all readiness that same night; so that on that day were brought over to the side of the gospel two excellent men, both laborers among the "Christians."

Bro. Gaston accompanied me to New Lisbon, and two or three other places; but his health failed him at the end of about three weeks, and his place was supplied by James Mitchel, who accompanied me to Warren, where the gospel greatly succeeded.

Thus, brother Gaston was the very first Christian minister who received the gospel after its restoration and who argued for the remission of sins by baptism. His enfeebled health, however, never permitted him to labor much, he was immersed for remission, at a general meeting, held at Austin Town two years after. He now rests with all the just until the resurrection. His life was righteous; his death was glorious.

EDITOR.

STUBENVILLE, OHIO, DECEMBER 10th, 1834.

BELOVED BROTHER SCOTT,

Few persons will hear the circumstance which I am about to relate with emotions such as you must feel. I grieve for a departed brother in the Lord; you for a companion and fellow labourer in the gospel, one who stood by you under circumstances the most trying and impressive, at a time when you alone, amidst all opposition, faced a frowning world. I allude to brother Joseph Gaston—he sleeps in peace—his sorrows are no more.

Being aware of his approaching dissolution, he requested me to inform you of it. The sensations which his departure produced in me and all present, cannot be imparted to others, nor can they ever be forgotten. It was, indeed, singularly impressive.

He was, as you know, predisposed to hæmorrhage from the lungs; his last illness commenced in this way. I was with him from Thursday, 4th, until his death, which occurred on Saturday.

Before day I was called to his bed side. His glazed eye, cold extremities, laborious breathing, and feeble pulse, assured me that the lamp of life was nearly extinguished. He lay in this situation a length of time unable to speak, or lift his hands. While we expected every breath to be his last, suddenly, to the astonishment of all present, his countenance lighted up by a placid smile, he began to raise his cold and lifeless hands to heaven, and exclaimed, "Glory to God! O my Saviour thou hast delivered me!" His eyes which were yet in death, sparkled with joy, and beamed with an expression which language cannot describe. After continuing these exclamations a

few minutes his breathing became free, and his voice shrill and loud. He then addressed us thus; "My friends, a dying man could not do as I am doing; this strength is not my own; the hand of the Lord is in this matter: he has enabled me in this last extremity to bear testimony to the truth The devil tempted me, and tried me; but the Lord vanquished him and gave me the victory. This night I'll be with Jesus. Some people have called me a mud dabbler, but that matters not to me, judgment belongs to the Lord, he will recompense them. I plead for baptism—for the remission of sins, in my life time, and *I plead for it in death.*

O! sinners tremble for that which awaits you if you do not obey the Lord. Let not tradition deceive you. I tried it but found it to be a delusion. My eyes were opened by reading the word of God. It means what it says; believe and obey it, for nothing else will save you. *Repent and be immersed* * in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, or God will sweep you off with the besom of destruction. Young people tell your parents these things; and, parents, tell them your children; tell the neighbourhood—tell the territory." He then exhorted us to try by some means to get the people out to hear the gospel. He continued his speech in a loud and clear voice, during twenty minutes, using his hands with freedom, and speaking with more animation than ever I heard him do in his usual state of health. When he ceased, his children were brought to him whom he embraced affectionately. His hands fell powerless by his sides—his breathing became laborious as before, and he expired in ten minutes.

If any one should imagine that I have given a false colouring to the above circumstance testimony can be adduced to establish them that I have not. There were a number of persons present, both Saints and Sinners.

I have not related all he said, but so far as I have gone, I have, as far as I recollect given his own words.

The triumphant death of our beloved brother did much to assuage the grief of his amiable and affectionate companion, and also that of his friends. It is likewise calculated to influence the disciples to persevere in the Christian race, and imitate his exemplary life. The hope of a disciple is an anchor to the soul—sure and steadfast. Who would not wish to obtain the forgiveness of sins, and live a life of faith in Jesus Christ, that they might die the death of the righteous, and escape the wrath which is to come?

P. G. Y.

CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

Brother Burnet has undertaken to furnish the Reformation with a new and corrected edition of the CHRISTIAN BAPTIST, and, no doubt his expences, when he shall have got it out, will not be less than three or four thousand dollars. It behooves the brethren, therefore, for whose use he is publishing it, to consider this, and by all means to extend to Brother Burnet the encouragement to which his spirited enterprize entitles him. We are going into Kentucky, and will be most happy to act the part of Agent in behalf of all such as shall be pleased to subscribe to the work

WALTER SCOTT.

CARTHAGE, 29th JAN. 1835.

☞ It is expected that the Baptist will be ready for boxing up about the first of April.

W. S.

* He used the word immerse.